



News Release

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Hospital infection control in Washington — new tool shows how they rate

OLYMPIA — Washington residents can now compare and research [infection rates for hospitals](http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehsphi/hai/0_hai_default.htm) (www.doh.wa.gov/ehsphi/hai/0_hai_default.htm) in the state with a first-of-its-kind resource. Infection information reported by the state Department of Health is easily accessible online.

Infections that develop during or soon after care in a hospital are known as health care associated infections. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says these types of infections are one of the top 10 leading causes of death nationwide — and many of them are preventable. The Web site gives consumers a chance to use infection rates to help make health care decisions.

“Patient safety is our priority and effective infection control is a key,” says Secretary of Health Mary Selecky. “People now have easy access to information about infection rates in hospitals across the state that they didn’t have before. Our Web site allows everyone to take better control of their health and feel confident about health care choices they make for their families.”

Project development began in 2007 when the legislature directed the state Department of Health to establish the Health Care Associated Infections Program. The agency worked with the Washington State Hospital Association to create this new resource. “Washington’s hospitals are enthusiastic participants in providing this new information about hospital infection rates,” said Carol Wagner, vice president for patient safety at the Washington State Hospital Association. “We believe that public reporting offers information that helps hospitals improve, assists consumers in making good decisions about hospital care, and creates the opportunity for collaboration between hospitals and quality experts.”

Health care professionals and members of the public also helped the state develop the Web site. It has information about infection risks and prevention.

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Visit the Washington Department of Health Web site at <http://www.doh.wa.gov> for a healthy dose of information.